



NEWS RELEASE

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Hearing Set for Small Business Owners to Comment About Excessive Federal Regulatory Enforcement

Pierre, South Dakota – Small business owners, community leaders and representatives of trade associations concerned about excessive enforcement of federal rules can voice their complaints at a U.S. Small Business Administration Regulatory Fairness Board Hearing in Pierre on April 13, 2006, from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

The hearing will be held at the Ramkota River Centre, located at 920 W. Sioux Avenue, Gallery B, Pierre.

Members of SBA's Region VIII Regulatory Fairness Board and representatives of federal regulatory agencies will hear comments and complaints about regulatory enforcement and compliance.

"Small Businesses comprise over 80% of the businesses in the country. They want to do good things and do right by the government. They want to communicate their concerns to government agencies," James J. Larsen, Chairman of the Region VIII Regulatory Fairness Board, said. "Regulatory Fairness Hearings facilitate that communication. Working in conjunction with Governor Round's Red Tape Task Force, this hearing is intended to provide the best possible avenue for small businesses to share concerns about the impact of regulations and regulatory enforcement."

This forum offers small business owners a chance to express their concerns about federal compliance practices in South Dakota.

Comments and complaints presented during the hearing will be directed to the appropriate federal regulatory agency. This information will also be shared with federal officials in the Ombudsman's annual report to Congress, and with managers of federal regulatory agencies to assist them with their enforcement actions.

The National Ombudsman's authority to respond to comments on compliance issues is limited to federal regulatory enforcement matters and does not include concerns about obtaining federal contracts, regulations in general, or securing guaranteed loans.

The Pierre hearing is open to the public. Those wishing to testify should contact Jon Haverly at (605) 330-4243, extension 42, or by email at jon.haverly@sba.gov before the hearing. Should a small business owner or representative be unable to attend, written testimony may be sent in advance of the hearing to be included in the public record.

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Comments and concerns about federal enforcement actions can be addressed directly to SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman at 1-888-734-3247 (REGFAIR). For more information about the national ombudsman and this hearing, you may visit the National Ombudsman's Web site at www.sba.gov/ombudsman.

For information on SBA's programs and services in South Dakota, call the South Dakota Office at (605) 330-4231. You may also visit the South Dakota District Office Web site at www.sba.gov/sd.

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The SBA helps small businesses each year with access to capital and credit through its financial assistance program, as well as providing technical training and business start up and expansion counseling, disaster loans for businesses and homeowners, and federal contracting and procurement assistance. For more information about the SBA go to www.sba.gov or call the SBA's Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA, or TDD 704-344-6640 for the hearing impaired.